

REMARKS

Applicant has amended the claims to specify the relationship of the processor with respect to at least one other element in each claim, and in response to the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112. Applicant submits that the amendments overcome this rejection.

The Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 over the Emmons patent is similar to a previous rejection of the claims in the Office action dated January 18, 2001.

During the interview on March 16, 2001 between the Examiner, the inventor Donald Smart, the assignee's representative Donald Svetkoff, and the undersigned, the distinctions between claims 40 and 55 and the Emmons patent were discussed. Applicant wishes to remind the Examiner that he allowed the claims over the Emmons patent after this interview.

In particular, Mr. Smart and the undersigned explained that in the Emmons patent, selection of the repetition rate (the inverse of the time interval between pulses) would affect pulse shape. In particular, Emmons controls pulse shape by controlling the period of time during which the modulator or modulators are open, and thus the only way to control repetition rate (or the time interval between pulses) would be to control the period of time during which the modulator or modulators are closed. But, any change in the period of time during which the modulator or modulators are closed will also affect pulse shape, as is explained in applicant's specification. Claims 40, 86, 88, and 98 currently specify that according to applicant's invention, selection of the time interval between pulses does not affect the pulse shape or pulse "energy characteristic."

Similarly, Mr. Smart and the undersigned explained that in the Emmons patent, selection of pulse shape would affect repetition rate (or the time interval between pulses). In particular, Emmons controls pulse shape by controlling the period of time during which the modulator or modulators are open. But, any change in the period of time during which the modulator or modulators are open will also affect repetition rate or the time interval between pulses (unless this change were to be compensated for by an exactly inverse modification of the time during which the modulator or modulators are closed, which is certainly not suggested by Emmons).

Claims 55, 87 currently specify that according to applicant's invention, selection of the pulse shape does not affect the time interval between pulses.

Accordingly, applicant submits that all of the independent claims remain patentable over the Emmons patent for the same reasons set forth in the interview.

With respect to the Examiner's objection to the inclusion of computer 11 in the drawings, applicant submits that the original disclosure does support the in showing of computer 11. In particular, page 13, lines 8-12 of the application as filed states:

The operator can choos a desired laser pulse width by computer control.

The computer is preprogrammed using a look-up table to provide the correct Q-switch storage time for the desired laser pulse width. The computer also provides the correct timing signal for the AOM deflector.

Thus, the application as filed describes computer 11 and its connection to Q-switch 20 and AOM deflector 26.